

## **FRANKLIN PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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### **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL

**FROM:** BRYAN W. TABERNER, AICP, DIRECTOR

**RE:** North Grove Priority Development Area Redevelopment Concept,  
Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel

**Cc:** Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator; Alecia Alleyne, Assistant to Town  
Administrator; AMY LOVE, TOWN PLANNER

**DATE:** JUNE 2, 2022

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For over fifteen years the Town has worked to clean up and redevelop the so-called “Nu-Style Property” on Grove Street. The Town owned property (parcel # 276-022-000) at 21 Grove Street was one of several properties in a small mill complex that has a long manufacturing history (at least 90 years), including textiles and costume jewelry. The parcels and related buildings were historically occupied by Norfolk Woolen Mills, Unionville Woolen Mills, Franklin Paint Company, and most recently by Nu-Style Company & Image Jewelry.

Environmental contamination from previous owners, especially Nu-Style Company & Image Jewelry, was significant. Starting in 2006 the Town worked to assess and remediate contaminated soils and groundwater, and redevelop the property. Substantial funding was provided by Norfolk County, MassDevelopment, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Town for the assessment and remediation work. Several attempts to move the project forward to redevelopment were unsuccessful, including in 2017, when the Town distributed an RFP to find a company or individual who would continue assessment and remediation activities and redevelop the property.

For the last couple years the Department of Planning and Community Development has worked to push forward a new redevelopment concept that would utilize the Town’s Nu-Style property and several adjacent privately owned parcels to revitalize that portion of Grove Street. This neighborhood known as the North Grove Priority Development Area (PDA) has several parcels in need of redevelopment, and one that is still undeveloped.

The complexities of the Town-owned property, and surrounding properties, have made redevelopment of the North Grove PDA extremely difficult. The Town does not have the needed technical staff to implement a project of this nature by itself. DPCD reached out to MassDevelopment for assistance in the form of funding or technical assistance. As a result, the Town is being provided with technical assistance through an Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel (TAP).

If you'd like to know a little about the Urban Land Institute Boston/New England TAP program follow the following link: <https://boston.uli.org/get-involved/technical-assistance-panels/>.

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ULI's TAP will be in Town on June 8, 2022 to perform a day long assessment of a new development concept developed by DPCD - *North Grove PDA Revitalization and Access Roadway Project*. The Technical Assistance Panel consists of professionals in the fields of development, planning, real estate, economic development and environmental science.

In general the TAP will work to answer the following questions:

1. Is the Town's *North Grove PDA/EOA Revitalization and Access Roadway Project* actually feasible given existing constraints, or are there better options to clean up and redevelop the Town's Nu-Style property and stimulate private investment in the North Grove PDA?
2. Can the Town create a public/private development partnership to implement the Proposed Project (or other project conceived during the TAP) where all parties gain in the end?
3. What specific process should the Town (and/or public private partnership) take to implement the chosen revitalization project?

The TAP professional will present their findings at your meeting on June 8, 2022. I look forward to seeing the results of their work. Please let me know if you have questions.